

Fall 1985

WVRHC Newsletter, Fall 1985

West Virginia & Regional History Center

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West Virginia and Regional History Collection

NEWSLETTER

No. 3

West Virginia University Library

Fall 1985

Confederate Map and Letter Illustrate Battle and Hardships of Military Life

Camp Mason Dec 27, 1861

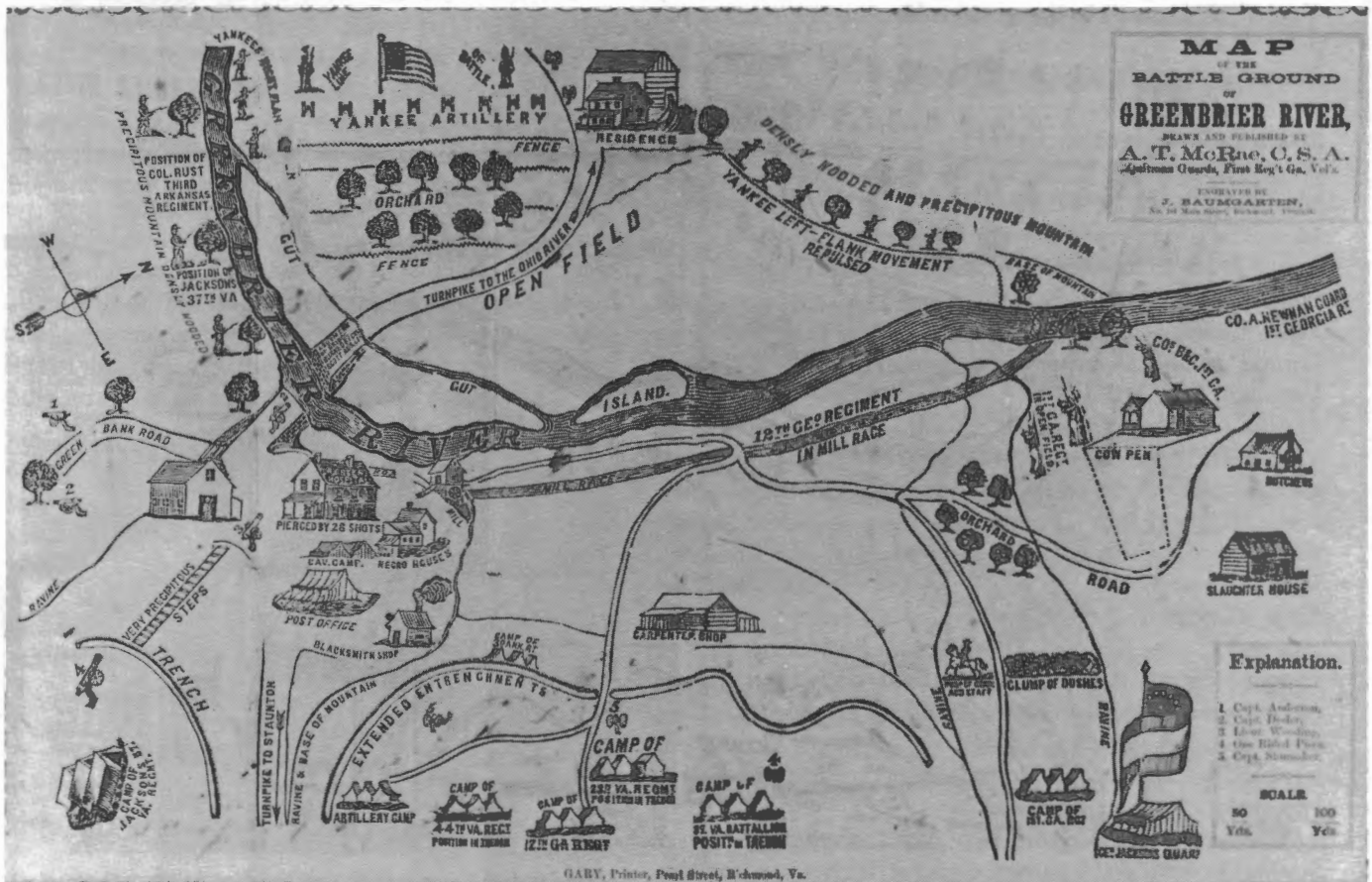
My Dear Wife,

I am trying to write you a letter with fingers half frozen, and I hope I may succeed in doing so: of all the cold weather I've ever known this is the extremest: a constant north wind has been blowing since last night, playing the "deuce" with tents all around.

So wrote Lt. Whiteford D. Russell in a letter to his wife in Augusta, Georgia on a cold winter's day back in 1861.

The Confederate officer's words illustrate the privations and hardships of winter encampment during the Civil War.

A member of the 1st Georgia Volunteers of the Confederate Army of the Northwest, Russell was at the time assigned to the command of General T. J. "Stonewall" Jackson, leisurely encamped for the moment near Winchester, Virginia, during a brief winter hiatus. Several weeks earlier though, Russell's regiment had been embroiled in the Battle of Greenbrier River on the present day site of Bartow, Pocahontas County, West Virginia. A map of the battlefield, drawn by a member of Russell's outfit, was published in Richmond shortly after the conflict occurred. For his wife's edification, Lt. Russell enclosed a



Map of the field and troop movement during the Battle of Greenbrier River, 3 October 1861, drawn by a confederate soldier.

West Virginia and Regional History Collection NEWSLETTER.
A triannual publication of the West Virginia and Regional
History Collection at the West Virginia University Library,
Colson Hall, Morgantown, West Virginia 26506. (304) 293-3536.

Staff: David Bartlett, Annette Cotter, John Cuthbert, Harold
Forbes, Susan Beates Hansen, Mary Markey, Martha
Neville, George Parkinson.

Editor: John Cuthbert



continued

Confederate Map

copy of this map in his December 27th letter. One of only 3 copies known to have survived, this map, along with the lieutenant's letter, was recently acquired by the West Virginia Collection.

Due perhaps to the engagement's minimal casualties despite intense fighting, the Battle of Greenbrier River remains a relatively little known incident in Civil War history. The battle represented an effort by Union forces to dislodge Confederate troops from an encampment at Bartow where the Greenbrier River crossed the strategically vital Parkersburg-Staunton Turnpike.

Union commander, Brigadier General Joseph R. Reynolds, fresh from a pair of successful encounters with Confederate troops in the western Virginia mountains was determined to gain control of the Turnpike affording Union access to the key Confederate stronghold of Staunton. Mustering an army of approximately 5000 men and a pair of cannon batteries, Reynolds assembled in preparation to take Camp Bartow on the summit of Cheat Mountain, 12 miles to Bartow's north, in late September of 1861. His forces reportedly included nine regiments of infantry from Indiana and Ohio, along with Bracken's Indiana Rangers, Robinson's Ohio Cavalry, Greenfield's Pennsylvania Cavalry, Battery G, 4th U.S. Artillery, Loomis' Michigan Battery and Battery A of the 1st West Virginia Light Artillery.

Along with Lt. Russell's outfit, the 1st Georgia Volunteers, Confederate General Henry R. Jackson's command included the 12th Georgia, 3rd Arkansas, 23rd, 25th, 31st, and 44th Virginia infantries, Sterrett's Churchville, Virginia Cavalry, and the Shumacher and Anderson Virginia batteries. Atop nearby Allegheny Mountain the 52nd Virginia Regiment under Colonel John B. Baldwin guarded Camp Bartow's flank and surveyed the line of communication to Staunton. Although the confederate forces were seriously outnumbered at about 1800, they possessed the distinct advantage of being firmly entrenched within a precipitous terrain that both protected and concealed their defenses.

After an uncomfortable two day descent from Cheat Summit in cold, wet weather, General Reynolds' troops encountered Confederate pickets and advanced guard as they

approached Bartow at daylight on October 3. Pushing these units back to the Confederate fortifications, a full-scale battle commenced at approximately 8 a.m.

The engagement began with an artillery duel that lasted approximately one hour but inflicted no overwhelming losses upon either side. The Union infantry then took the offensive with a direct assault on the Confederate camp, but, as the "Map of the Battleground" suggests, they found it quite impossible to cross an open field, ford the Greenbrier and ascend the steep hill upon which Camp Bartow was situated. Thwarted up the middle, Reynolds directed his efforts to the Confederate flanks. A chiefly diversionary attack to the left was repelled by the 3rd Arkansas Infantry, while the heart of Reynolds' forces advanced to the right under cover of dense woods. Detecting this movement, General Jackson advanced the 1st and 12th Georgia regiments to the east bank of the Greenbrier River to meet the invaders as they emerged from the trees to cross the river. Simultaneously, the Virginia battery opened fire and Union forces fell into disarray. Standing on a hill, surveying the field of battle, General Reynolds spotted the approach of Colonel Baldwin's forces who had descended Allegheny Mountain to join General Jackson. Vastly overestimating the total size of the Confederate army, Reynolds abruptly disengaged and ordered a return to Cheat Mountain.

From start to finish, the battle lasted about seven hours and incredibly, despite its intensity, losses in dead and wounded did not exceed fifty on either side.

West Virginia Newspaper Project

Several years ago, the National Endowment for the Humanities began the United States Newspaper Project in order to establish a comprehensive nationwide online bibliography of extant newspapers and to help with their preservation. This new program was a response to an old problem: the nation's newspapers were difficult to find and use. Too often, historians, librarians, lawyers, students,



West Virginia Newspaper Project assistant director, Susan Hansen and director, Harold Forbes.

continued

Newspaper Project

and genealogists, among others, found existing bibliographies to be inadequate and sought-after newspapers unavailable. The Endowment planned for one historical agency in each state to promulgate the goals of the national program, and in 1983, the West Virginia Collection, West Virginia University Library, was selected to perform that function in West Virginia.

Over the past two years the West Virginia Newspaper Project has had remarkable success. Unknown files of newspapers have been located and many new titles discovered. Research on newspaper publishing has vastly enriched our understanding of the history of journalism in West Virginia and the region. Staff have visited a total of nine historical societies, fifty-one newspaper offices, thirty-seven libraries, and thirteen individuals in their quest to gather accurate holdings information and to publicize the Newspaper Project. Preparing a press release and a brief publishing history for each area visited, we have carefully explained our mission and also provided newspaper editors with material for local news features. Librarians, editors, and local historians have rewarded these publicity efforts with leads to dozens of new sources of publishing information and newspaper files.

The National Endowment, on many occasions, has recognized the excellence of the West Virginia component of its efforts to make American newspapers accessible. In 1984, the West Virginia project was one of only five state projects to receive phase two funding from the Endowment of twenty-eight who applied. Since then our efforts have been referred to as a model for other states to follow. On the local scene the West Virginia Press Association, the West Virginia Library Association and other organizations and individuals have praised the efficiency and thoroughness of Project efforts.

Despite considerable progress, work remains to be done, particularly in the area of microfilming, which will require larger financial expenditures than remaining grant funds will cover. The National Endowment has encouraged us to apply for what they designate as phase three funding which would begin in July 1986 and run for two more years. The goals of this phase would be: 1) microfilming of 450 volumes of newspapers; 2) updating the CONSER/OCLC records; 3) and the continuation of other grant related activities like searching for new titles and organizing the West Virginia Collection's holdings.

Of course, most significantly, if phase three moneys are secured, the Collection will be able to finish one of the most successful projects of its history, an effort of immediate and tangible benefit to academia as well as the general public.

Harold M. Forbes
Associate Curator

Anyone with a knowledge of West Virginia newspapers that may have thus far escaped attention is urged to contact Project Director Forbes.



Mastheads of three 19th century Ritchie County newspapers.

Visiting Committee West Virginia and Regional History Collection

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Old-timers often speak with awe about the enormous trees and dark interiors of the West Virginia forests prior to the logging era of about 1880-1930. Photographs like this one bear ample witness to their claims.

A recent *Goldenseal* article by Norman Julian concerning "Logging and Loggers," featuring this photograph drawn from the West Virginia Collection's photo archives, has sparked several letters of inquiry. Since the caption printed with the illustration does not specify a location, curious readers have written to ask if the photo isn't actually of a California redwood, rather than a West Virginia tree.

The photograph comes from the David Dare Brown collection, which was donated to the Collection in 1962. It is identified on the reverse as, "Pardee & Curtin Lumber operation in early 1920s in Nicholas County. Man in foreground is a Hamrick. Location uncertain—thought to be old Curtin or Hominy Falls. Courtesy Mrs. Charles Buck, WV."

So until someone can prove that the photograph was mislabelled, we'll assume that California hasn't always had a monopoly on big trees.

Secession Polls Show Strong Union Support in Harrison County

Manuscripts technician David Bartlett's stalwart efforts to organize a large collection of county court records recently yielded a formidable discovery. While ferreting through a group of boxes acquired from the Harrison County Courthouse, Bartlett unearthed a series of election returns that show how individual Harrison Countians voted on the Virginia referendum regarding the Civil War Secession Ordinance of 1861. The referendum sought popular endorsement of the Virginia government's decision to secede from the United States at the beginning of the Civil War.

While historians have long recognized the general dis-

sent of Virginia's western counties on the issue of secession, little primary evidence of this sort has survived to illustrate this tenet. Furthermore, beyond broad generalities, the varying loyalties within the region's localities and special interest groups has been much debated. In recording the names and votes of the residents of Clarksburg and eight other communities, the Harrison County polls provide hard facts from a key political center within the western Virginia heartlands.

Bartlett, a West Virginia University history graduate from Grafton, WV, began work on the Harrison County Court Records with the assistance of several work-study students shortly after he joined the Collection's staff last fall. His first major assignment at the Regional History Collection, David notes that precarious circumstances led the archives into our possession. "Several members of the Harrison County Historical Society stumbled onto the material just before it was to be pitched from the sidewalk into a dumpster. The Courthouse was being renovated and



David Bartlett looks up from his work with the Harrison County Court Records.

someone had told workers to clear the material from the basement where it had been stored for decades in old paper sacks. Some of it was untouched from the time it was originally folded and wrapped."

Bartlett's goal is to prepare an inventory and index to the entire record series. While the earliest papers in the collection date from the 1790s, the bulk of the material covers the years from 1815 to 1865, relating primarily to civil and criminal matters regarding the county's earliest settlers. "The most significant material is from the early Civil War period when the Union Army occupied the county and the

In addition to the collection's historical value, David found firsthand that the court records contain a wealth of genealogical information. "I found the records of a father and son on my mother's side of the family who had emigrated here from Ulster at the turn of the nineteenth century," he said. "It was a court case involving the transfer of stolen property—horses and cattle. Apparently they had fenced the goods. The son testified against the father."

[illegible]

Two pages from the Virginia Secession Ordinance for Lumberport, May 23, 1861. A vote for the amendment (left column on each page) was a vote for secession.

An Invitation to Join the
WEST VIRGINIA AND REGIONAL HISTORY ASSOCIATION

In order to foster the Regional History Collection's work in preserving and disseminating historical information pertaining to West Virginia and the central Appalachian region, the West Virginia and Regional History Association was conceived in the summer of 1985.

The association's foremost goal is to develop a network of communication between institutions and individuals throughout the state and across the nation who share an interest in West Virginia history whether it be in the Civil War, genealogy, folklore or any other topic.

Through the West Virginia Collection's triannual NEWSLETTER, members will learn about historical projects and activities of the Collection and around the state. New research resources will be announced as they become available, and articles on West Virginia history and historical preservation will keep readers well informed.

Members will upon request receive free brochures regarding the holdings of the West Virginia Collection pertaining to a variety of special topics. They will also be first to receive announcements of new Collection publications.

Above all, members will have the satisfaction of participating in the important work of documenting and promoting the study of West Virginia's intriguing past.

The cost of membership has been placed low — \$10. annually — to encourage broad participation. Those who would like to assume a larger role in furthering the Association's goals are urged to join at the donor (\$50.), patron (\$100.), or life member (\$500.) level. As a special premium, upper level members will receive complimentary copies of selected West Virginia Collection publications — guides, recordings — and will have the opportunity to purchase others at cost. Regardless of level, however, all members will receive Collection publications at a discount whenever possible.

To join, simply send your check to the West Virginia Collection, Colson Hall, Morgantown, WV 26506.

*Checks should be made payable
West Virginia University Foundation

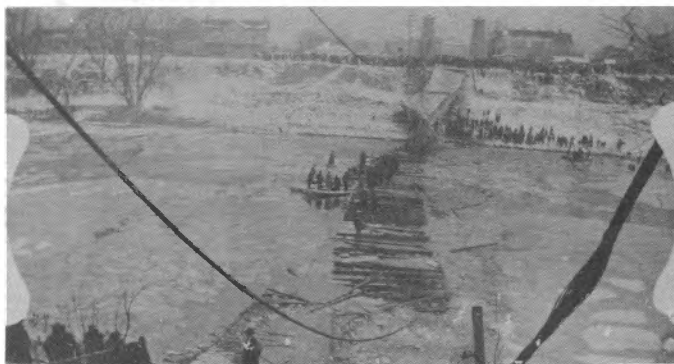
Selected Accessions List

Battle of Greenbrier River. Papers, 1861. 3 pages. Acquired, 1985. A&M 2966.

A printed map drawn and published by A. T. McRae of the Quitman Guards, First Georgia Volunteer Regiment which was engraved and printed in Richmond, VA. The map shows buildings, physical features, and troop positions for the Battle of Greenbrier River, 3 October 1861. The letter accompanying the map is from Lt. Whiteford D. Russell to his wife in Augusta, GA. Russell who fought at this battle, refers to it and to this map in this letter dated 27 December 1861 in which he emphasizes the privations of winter encampment. He sends her his regrets and apologies for writing such a brief letter, but he is inhibited from writing more because he is numbed by the freezing temperatures. Winter cold and the severe wind playing havoc with the tents in which they are quartered has temporarily discouraged any hopes of his re-enlisting.

Downs, William S. Papers, 1900-1926. 3 ft. Gift, 1985. A&M 2946.

Downs was an engineering professor at WVU and an engineer with the West Virginia State Road Commission. Included are records and photos of road-building projects in Bolivia and West Virginia, including diaries regarding Downs' work inspecting roads and bridges for the West Virginia State Road Commission between 1915-1922. The collection also contains information regarding hydro-electric plant construction in West Virginia including contracts, records, news clippings and photographs of the Cheat River Power Project which Downs directed. A memoir of Downs' student years at West Virginia University ca. 1905 is also included.



On December 15, 1904, a cable supporting the suspension bridge over the Elk River at Charleston snapped. Two children on their way to school were killed as the bridge collapsed. Many more were injured.

Elk River Bridge. Photograph, 1904. Acquired, 1985.

Photograph of the collapse of the suspension bridge over the Elk River in Charleston, West Virginia, 15 December 1904.

Kodol, West Virginia. Records, 1909-1952. 1 reel of microfilm. Gift, 1985. A&M 2999.

Records of money orders from the Kodol post office and of accounts from the general store located in the same building in Wetzel County.



Widowed by the southern West Virginia mine wars of the early 1920s Mrs. Sid Hatfield and Mrs. Ed Chambers pose on the steps of the U.S. Senate during federal investigations. Miners' March Documents.

Miners' March. Documents, 1919-1921. 5 items. Acquired, 1985. A&M 2992.

Affidavits against J. E. Wilburn and Dan Chaffin, dated May, 1924, apparently used in trials following the mine wars of 1921 in Logan County. Wilburn was convicted for the murder of Deputy Sheriff John Gore. Also includes an anonymous note passed from one Moundsville prisoner to another, offering to give evidence to the other's attorney, and photographs of noted participants in the mine wars.

Morgantown Women's Christian Temperance Union. Records, 1897-1984. 1 reel of microfilm. Loan, 1985. A&M 2998.

Papers of the women's society include minute books and financial records. The construction of the Fayette Street WCTU Community Building is documented, as well as the chapter's nationally-recognized "Americanization Program" of activities designed to help immigrants to adjust to life in the United States.

Shepherdstown Account Books. Ledgers, 1845-1899. 4 items. Acquired, 1984. A&M 2997.

Financial records of Jefferson County, West Virginia, doctors I. S. Tanner and George W. Banks, including notes on diseases a formulae for medicine. Account book of farm run by Banks' mother, Martha Banks, includes an inventory of house furnishings and farm equipment and records of crops raised and sold.

Trial of George Viereck. 1942. 1 bound typescript. Gift, 1985. A&M 3001.

Transcript of the proceedings concerning Rush Dew Holt's book "Who's Who Among the War-Mongers", allegedly sent to Germany for Nazi approval. Used in the trial of George Viereck on charges of failure to reveal status as a German agent.

Victory Baptist Church. Record Book, 1849-1873. 1 item. Loaned for duplication, 1985. A&M 2994.

Brief minutes of the Salem, West Virginia, church board's monthly meetings. Includes a list of church members.

WMMN, Fairmont. Ledgers, 1936-1941. Gift, 1985. A&M 2993.

Two program ledgers of radio station WMMN, Fairmont, West Virginia. A pioneer station in West Virginia broadcasting history, WMMN first went on the air in 1928. Throughout the 1930s and 1940s the station boasted a tremendous following within West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Ohio for the station's live broadcasts of country and bluegrass music. The program logs in this collection cover the years 1936-37 and 1939-41.



W. E. Rumsey Family on steps of their new Park St., Morgantown home, ca. 1905. Loaned for duplication.



Christmas tree in unidentified Morgantown home, ca. 1910. From Metheny Photography Collection

Beverley, Robert. The History of Virginia, in Four Parts. 2d ed., revised and enlarged. London: F. Fayram and J. Clarke, and T. Bickerton, 1722.

Study includes: 1. The history of the first settlement of Virginia, and the government thereof, to the year 1706. 2. The natural productions and conveniences to the country, suited to trade and improvement. 3. The native Indians, their religion, laws, and customs, in war and peace. 4. The present state of the country, as to the policy of the government, and the improvements of the land, the 10th of June 1720. By a native and inhabitant of the place.

Great Kanawha Estate Evidence of Value and Title. (N.P., ca. 1860). Topographical, agricultural, and mineralogical analysis of the Great Kanawha Valley. 75 pp.

Jackson, Isaac Rand. A Sketch of the Life and Public Services of William Henry Harrison: Compiled from Authentic Sources. Wheeling: Press of the Western Virginia Times, 1836. 24pp.

Letter from the Governor and Council of Maryland, Transmitting a Report of the Commissioners Appointed to Survey the River Potomac. January 28, 1823. Washington: Printed by Gales & Seaton, 1823.

Survey of the Navigability and the potential improvement thereof of the Potomac River.

Pendleton, William Kimbrough. An Address Delivered before the Agricultural Society of Marshall County, VA., at their Annual Fair, Held at Moundsville, on the 19th of October, 1853. Wheeling: Printed by Swearingen, Taylor & Co., 1854. 22pp.

Selected Rare Book Accessions

Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Company. Time Book for the Running of the Trains on the Main Stem of the Baltimore and Ohio Rail Road: To Take Effect Sunday, June 17, 1866, at 12 O'Clock Noon. Baltimore, Md.: printed by John Murphy & Co., 1866. 33pp.

Includes train schedules for stops in West Virginia towns.

Sodom and Gomorrah of To-day, or the History of Keystone, West Virginia, 1912.

The names of the author and publisher are not given, but the author calls himself "Virginia Lad." Detailed accusation of rampant crime and sin in Keystone community.

Some Facts About McDowell County, West Virginia, 1912. Keystone, W. Va.: Published by A. D. Sowers.

History, education, biography, and politics; refutes the claims of the author of "Sodom and Gomorrah of To-day."

Selected Rare Newspaper Accessions.

The Daily Register (Wheeling) Sept. 8, 1863–Dec. 31, 1864. Loaned for duplication.

The Daily Union (Wheeling) Feb. 2–May 25, 1861. Loaned for duplication.

Daily Wheeling Times and Daily Wheeling Gazette (Wheeling) Jan. 1849–Dec. 1850. Loaned for duplication.

The Guerilla (Charleston) Sept. 29, 1862. Acquired.

The Preston Republican (Terra Alta) Jan. 1913–Dec. 1915, Jan. 1917–Dec. 1919. Gift.

Ritchie Gazette (Harrisville) 3 bd. vols. Completes run of May 1873–Sept. 1899.

Union Register (Union) March 6, 1869. Gift.

Weston Herald (Weston) Jan. 3, 1855. Gift.

Western Courier (Charleston) July 23, 1822–March 16, 1825. Gift.

Western Virginia and Kanawha County Gazette (Charleston) July 5, 1826–Sept. 27, 1826. Gift.

Wheeling Times and Advertiser (Wheeling) Jan.–Dec. 1844. Loaned for duplication.

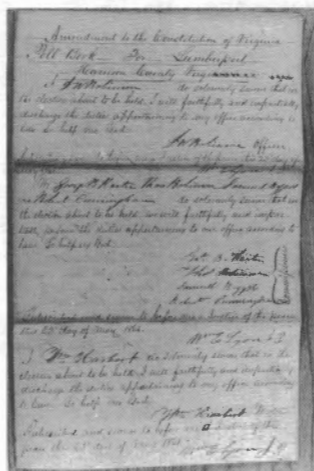
Wheeling Tri-Weekly Times and Advertiser (Wheeling) Jan. 1838–Dec. 1840, Jan.–Nov. 1847. Loaned for duplication.

Wheeling Tri-Weekly Gazette (Wheeling) Aug. 1835–Apr. 1836, May–Dec. 1839. Loaned for duplication.

Wheeling Tri-Weekly Register (Wheeling) April–Dec. 1869. Loaned for duplication.

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Page one of the Virginia Secession Ordinance poll book for Lumberport, Harrison County. See page 4.